

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 SANTO 02614 152315Z
ACTION ARA-14

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FM AMEMBASSY SANTO DOMINGO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4553

S E C R E T SANTO DOMINGO 2614

EO 11652 GDS
TAGS: PINT, PMIL, DR
SUB: PRD PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE DISCUSSES MILITARY

1. MAAG OFFICER WAS PAID A VISIT BY PRD PRESIDENTIAL
CANDIDATE ANTONIO GUZMAN, MAY 11. FORMAL VISIT WAS
ARRANGED BY OFFICER'S NEIGHBOR WHO IS FRIEND OF GUZMAN'S.
PRD PRESIDENTIAL HOPEFUL USED OPPORTUNITY TO INFORM US
MILITARY OF HIS PLANS FOR DOMINICAN ARMED FORCES SHOULD HE
WIN MAY 16 ELECTIONS.

2. GUZMAN EXPRESSED DEEP CONCERN OVER CORRUPTION IN
DOMINICAN MILITARY UNDER CURRENT ADMINISTRATION. HE SAID
HE WANTED A MILITARY WHICH ADHERED TO PROFESSIONALISM AND
REFRAINED FROM POLITICS AND EXCESSIVE MONEY-MAKING. TO
DEAL WITH PROBLEM HE SAID HE PLANNED TO GRADUALLY REMOVE
SEVERAL LEADING GENERAL OFFICERS SHOULD HE BE ELECTED,
SPECIFICALLY POLITICALLY POWERFUL CHIEF OF NATIONAL POLICE
MGEN. NEIT NIVAR SEIJAS. PRD LEADER ALSO EXPRESSED HIS
FRIENDSHIP TOWARD THE US, LAUDED PRESIDENT CARTER AND
HIS HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY AND ASSURED MAAG OFFICER THAT
DESPITE THE WIDELY HEARD VIEW THAT THE PRD IS LEFT-
LEANING, HE IS NOT A COMMUNIST SYMPATHIZER.

3. CURIOUS CIRCUMSTANCE OF GUZMAN TAKING TIME OUT OF
BUSY SCHEDULE IN FINAL BUSY DAYS OF HARD-FOUGHT CAMPAIGN

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PAGE 02 SANTO 02614 152315Z

REFLECTS DEGREE OF PREOCCUPATION IN PRD LEADERSHIP OVER
DIFFICULTIES THEY MAY ENCOUNTER IN DEALING WITH PRESENT
DOMINICAN MILITARY LEADERSHIP. MOST OF THESE OFFICERS
LEARNED THEIR TRADE UNDER THE LATE DICTATOR RAFAEL TRUJILLO
AND FOR THE LAST TWELVE YEARS HAVE KNOWN NOTHING BUT ABSOLUTE
LOYALTY TO PRESIDENT JOAQUIN BALAGUER. EXAMPLE OF THIS WAS
PUBLIC STATEMENT MAY 13 BY NAVY CHIEF OF STATE VICE-ADMIRAL

FRANCISCO JAVIER RIVERA CAMINERO WHO, WHILE ASSURING HE WOULD RESPECT RESULTS OF UPCOMING ELECTION, TOOK OPPORTUNITY TO DECLARE HIMSELF " A BALAGUERISTA" FROM THE TOP OF MY HEAD TO THE TIP OF MY TOES." HE SAID BALAGUER WOULD WIN THE MAY 16 ELECTION.

4. EMBOFFS HAVE OFTEN HEARD PRD LEADERS EXPRESS INTEREST THAT US MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT UNDERSTAND THAT THEIR PARTY IS NOT HOSTILE TO US AND USE ITS INFLUENCE TO MOLLIFY THE DOMINICAN MILITARY SHOULD IT COME TO POWER. (THIS REFLECTS AN UNREALISTIC, THOUGH COMMONLY HELD VIEW HERE OF DEGREE OF MAAG INFLUENCE OVER DOMINICAN ARMED FORCES, AS WELL AS OPINION THAT SOMEHOW US MILITARY CAN ACT INDEPENDENTLY.

5. COMMENT: WHATEVER GUZMAN'S INTENTIONS, HE HAS TOUCHED ON A VERY SENSITIVE SUBJECT. IN HIS OWN PUBLIC STATEMENTS, HE HAS EMPHASIZED THAT HE WOULD RESPECT THE CURRENT STRUCTURE OF THE ARMED FORCES. HOWEVER, HE IS SAYING IN PRIVATE THAT HE WOULD REMOVE SOME KEY OFFICERS. IT IS PRECISELY THIS ATTITUDE WHICH MAKES THE DR MILITARY HIERARCHY SO FEARFUL OF THE PRD'S ACHIEVING POWER. SHOULD THE PRD WIN THE ELECTION, ANY PRECIPITATE MOVES VIS-A-VIS THE MILITARY ARE LIKELY TO SET OFF A STRONG REACTION.
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